

Housing Programs & Services

NEWSLETTER

Prepare for Emergencies

September is National Preparedness Month. It is your responsibility to prepare for an emergency and to be self-reliant during times of disruption. The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) at www.fema.gov has many checklists for disaster preparedness.

FEMA recommends that you make a disaster plan. Decide where your family will meet in case of an emergency. Designate at least two meeting locations. The meeting location may be right outside your home or at the local library or place of worship. Practice escape routes from your home and neighborhood. Make sure each family member has an emergency contact card and keep the card in a wallet, purse, or backpack.

Second, get an emergency kit. This is sometimes called a 72-Hour Kit or a "Bug Out Bag." After an emergency, you may need to survive on your own for three days.

Electricity, water, and gas utilities may be unavailable for days. Your emergency kit should include:

- One gallon of water per person for at least three days – also water purification tablets are good to have in case the duration of your "Bug Out" exceeds the time you have allotted water;
- Non-perishable food for at

least three days – a good choice here are Mainstay bars both 2400 and 3600 calorie size. The ability to cook may not be an option depending on where you end up. Visit <http://www.foodsafety.gov/keep/emergency/index.html>



For ideas on food preparedness;

- First aid kit;
- Set of extra clothes per person;

- Cash and credit cards;
- Flashlight and extra batteries;
- Battery operated AM/FM radio with extra batteries;
- Personnel hygiene items: soap, toothbrush, toothpaste, medication, etc.;
- Copies of personal documents; and
- Whistle to signal for help.

For additional information and checklists for building an emergency supply kit, visit www.Ready.gov.

Residents are encouraged to visit Pinal County Local Emergency Planning Committee: <http://goo.gl/NJ4Dz> for information on how to be ready if disaster strikes.

Stay on top of the news for information concerning weather events, natural disasters, and other emergency situations. A well-informed public that is prepared will make everyone a lot safer and much more able to cope in an emergency.

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Notable News

Septic Tank repair costs can be out of reach for many homeowners. With proper maintenance, this may not be a problem. Follow these three easy steps to ensure the longevity and effectiveness of your septic tank:

- 1) Use Rid-X or other monthly treatment products. These products work to reduce the rate of sludge build-up to keep your system running smoothly until the next pumping.
- 2) Have your tank inspected and pumped regularly. Sludge in large quantities must be removed by a professional pumper. Do not inspect the tank yourself since the gasses that accumulate in the tank can be lethal.
- 3) Watch what is poured down the drains. Some household chemicals like bleach and anti-bacterial soaps can kill beneficial bacteria, so you should avoid flushing them down your drains.

Calendar

- August is Home Business Month—check with the City Clerk's Office for the requirements to having a home business.
- September 3—Labor Day, city offices are closed
- October is Breast Cancer Awareness Month—tell someone you know to get checked!



Programs

Housing Rehabilitation Program seeking eligible homeowners

The city continues to seek applications for the housing rehabilitation program. This program offers grant or loans to eligible homeowners for improvements to their homes which may include but are not limited to health and safety improvements, ADA accessibility, plumbing, electrical, roofing, HVAC, and code compliance. Eligibility requirements are dependent upon income, homeownership, and other factors. Please contact (480) 474-2635 for specific information on the program and how to get an application or visit www.ajcity.net/housing.

Looking to buy a home in AJ?

Pinal County has received grant funds from the US Department of Housing and Urban Development to assist potential homeowners with down payment and closing cost assistance as well as funding to make improvements to the home. Homes available for this program must be foreclosed, bank owned, or short sale properties within a designated Apache Junction neighborhood, other restrictions apply. For additional information about the program and whether you may qualify, contact Patricia Farnsworth from Pinal

County Housing at (520) 866-7234.

Seeking Homeowners and Volunteers for Annual Paint-A-Thon

The City continues their partnership with Rebuilding Together to bring the Rock-n-Roll Paint-a-Thon back to the City. Homeowners who are elderly or disabled and are low income may qualify to have the exterior of their home painted. Additionally, volunteers are needed to join the city team to paint the home of a qualified homeowner. Call (480) 474-2635 for information.

Housing Maintenance and Upkeep

Proper maintenance can help to prolong the life of your home and the systems that keep it livable. The City of Apache Junction has incorporated an on-line information center for tips on how to maintain your home. This helpful tool will assist you with general home maintenance, but always remember it is important to set aside money each month in case there is an emergency that you can not handle yourself. Always call in a professional instead of attempting to handle electrical or plumbing problems. Improper repairs can cause larger problems in the future. To view the on-line tool visit www.ajcity.net/rehab under home maintenance tips.

Busy Bee Home Maintenance Tips

Keeping your refrigerator clean and at a proper temperature will reduce your risk of foodborne bacteria and illness while helping to extend the life of your food. Follow these simple tips:

- 1) Set the refrigerator at 40 degrees or less. Any warmer and your food will be a breeding ground for bacteria;
- 2) Store perishables such as eggs and milk on interior shelves. The door temperatures can rise when the door is open;
- 3) Put raw meats in sealed containers so drippings can't taint other food;
- 4) Wipe up spills right away;
- 5) Keep produce in the crisper drawer. High humidity for veggies and low for fruits;
- 6) Divide leftovers into small, shallow containers. They will chill faster; and
- 7) Once a week, discard food past their prime. For handy tips on how long you should keep food read the labels and check out <http://www.foodsafety.gov/keep/charts/index.html>.

Examples include:

- 1) An open package of hot dogs—1 week;
- 2) Bacon—7 days;
- 3) Hamburger—1 to 2 days;
- 4) Soups (veggie and meat) - 3 to 4 days; and
- 5) Leftovers—3 to 4 days.

Bees Wishes



If you have a question or comment about anything written in this newsletter, please contact:
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www.ajcity.net
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Monday to Thursday 7 a.m. to 6 p.m.

RESOURCES

Homemade cleaning product continued... Remember vinegar, baking soda, lemon and water are your least expensive and best cleaning companions!

Linoleum or Tile Floor Cleaner—2 gallons hot water, 1/4 cup baking soda, 1/4 cup vinegar, a squirt or two of hand dishwashing liquid, and a few drops of pine oil or lemon juice for a fresh scent. Mix well and mop. No need to rinse.

Air Freshener— In a 32 oz spray bottle mix 1/8 cup of your favorite fabric softener, 2 tablespoons baking soda, hot tap water to fill the bottle, shake and spray!

HOUSING PROGRAM PURPOSE AND GOALS:

1. Eliminate health and safety hazards in homes;
2. Benefit low to moderate income residents; and
3. Improve neighborhoods and encourage stability.

Arizona water can be tough on your fixtures. Use a lemon to scrub hard water stains from faucets and stainless steel sinks.



Housing Funnies